

Seaton St. Paul's CofE Junior School

Seaton Park, Seaton, Workington, Cumbria CA14 1HA

Inspection dates

13–14 February 2019

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors at Seaton St Paul's have established a clear vision that makes the school a very safe, happy and welcoming place in which pupils learn well.
- The curriculum that leaders and governors provide makes good use of the opportunities that exist in the local area and environment. Pupils learn about their local community while developing skills across a range of subjects.
- The highly committed governors have a clear overview of the school's current improvement priorities because leaders provide them with a range of information.
- Governors are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses to enable them to monitor the impact of leaders' actions more fully.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge because leaders, including subject leaders, make good use of high-quality training. This has a positive impact on the progress that pupils make.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, including that of disadvantaged pupils, has improved over time. In the 2018 national tests the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was higher than the national average.
- As a result of the good teaching they receive, generally, pupils attain well in writing. The school's assessments show that in 2018, a slightly higher proportion of Year 6 pupils reached the expected and higher standards than the average nationally.
- Occasionally, mistakes in spelling and grammar detract from the overall quality of pupils' writing in English and in other subjects. When this happens, they make less progress.
- Improvements that leaders have made to the teaching of mathematics are enabling most pupils currently in the school to make strong progress.
- Some younger pupils of lower ability do not develop their mathematical-reasoning skills sufficiently to enable them to make the same strong progress as other pupils.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils talk of their aspirations for the future and have excellent attitudes to learning. They conduct themselves impeccably in class and around the school.
- Leaders and governors have successfully created a very strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are extremely vigilant and use the school's systems effectively to raise and record any concerns. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that governors have greater involvement in the whole-school self-evaluation and development planning process so that they are able to monitor the impact of leaders' actions more fully.
- Improve pupils' outcomes further by ensuring that:
 - teaching routinely promotes pupils' strong spelling and grammar skills in order to enhance the quality of their writing
 - younger pupils of lower ability are supported in developing better reasoning skills in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have established a culture of high expectation for pupils at Seaton St. Paul's. They have successfully motivated staff to share their determination to improve outcomes for pupils and to ensure that pupils live out the school's motto, 'We believe, we achieve, we succeed'.
- Leaders and governors recognise the wealth of opportunities for learning that exist within the local area and wider region. They have devised a curriculum that enriches pupils' learning through visits to local museums and places of interest as well as trips to cities further afield. Consequently, pupils develop skills across a range of subjects while learning more about the world around them.
- Leaders have established effective systems for holding teachers to account for pupils' progress and attainment. They have put in place a range of measures to ensure that their assessment of pupils' skills when they start at the school in Year 3 is as accurate as possible. This helps them to check that pupils are making enough progress over time. Teachers say that they value the opportunities that leaders provide for regular, detailed discussions about pupils' progress. This helps them to take the right actions if pupils are at risk of falling behind.
- Since the last inspection, subject leaders have developed their roles further, especially those with responsibility for English and mathematics. They participate in a range of monitoring activities to check the quality of teaching in their subjects and share their expertise with colleagues, for example by providing demonstration lessons. Teachers appreciate the support and training they receive from subject leaders and say that it is improving their subject knowledge.
- Leaders make good use of training to ensure that teachers develop professionally. They ensure that teachers have opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools to share and learn from good practice. For example, their attendance at local 'cluster meetings' helps teachers to compare their assessments with those of teachers in other schools, to ensure that they are as accurate as possible. This has a positive impact on the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding effectively. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school make progress in reading, writing and mathematics that is similar to that of their classmates across the country with similar starting points at the end of Year 2.
- Good leadership of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures that this group of pupils is well supported. Leaders ensure that staff who work with pupils with SEND have access to good training so that they know how best to support pupils. They have established effective systems for identifying and addressing pupils' needs. Communication with other agencies, where appropriate, is effective and timely. Consequently, pupils with SEND currently in the school are making strong progress from their various starting points.
- Leaders' and governors' good use of the physical education and sports premium grant enables pupils to have access to a wide range of sports activities during and after

school and to learn how to keep themselves healthy. Information from the school's assessments shows that more pupils are participating in sports as a result of their developing interests.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionately committed to the life of the school and share the headteacher's vision to improve outcomes for pupils. They are highly supportive of the school's efforts to work with local infant schools to ensure that pupils have a smooth transition into junior school.
- Governors meet regularly with senior leaders and subject leaders to ask questions about progress towards meeting the identified priorities for improvement. However, governors are not sufficiently involved in the process of evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses to enable them to understand how those priorities have emerged. As a result, their questions are not always focused sharply enough to enable them to hold leaders fully to account for pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors have been highly successful in establishing a very strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Everyone works hard together to ensure that pupils' welfare is prioritised. For example, when they arrive, visitors to the school are fully informed of the school's safeguarding expectations and governors carry out regular checks on the suitability of adults to work with children.
- Staff are confident in recognising the signs of abuse and neglect and are highly vigilant because leaders have made sure that they have the right training. Those who spoke to inspectors could explain clearly their clear understanding of the school's procedures for reporting concerns about pupils' welfare and of the high priority that safeguarding has in all meetings and discussions. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and their parents and carers agree with this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils benefit from teaching that is consistently good across classes and year groups. Teachers plan lessons that engage pupils' interests. Teachers' high expectations and clear explanations ensure that pupils settle quickly to work and behave extremely well. Very little time for learning is lost in lessons.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to plan carefully for pupils' different learning needs. They build upon what pupils already know and deepen their understanding by providing opportunities for them to apply their skills in different situations, for example when practising writing for different purposes or when solving different kinds of problems in mathematics.
- Teachers are skilful at using questioning to check pupils' understanding in lessons. This helps them to adjust and reshape tasks in order to address any misconceptions as they

emerge. Teachers' explanations help pupils to understand where they have gone wrong so that they learn from their mistakes. For example, pupils learning about fractions in a Year 4 lesson made progress when the teacher helped them to understand better which mathematical operations to carry out. Sometimes, younger key stage 2 pupils of lower ability do not have enough opportunities to explain their reasoning in mathematics. This limits teachers' opportunities to assess what they know and understand and they make less progress as a result.

- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise their important reading, writing and, where appropriate, mathematics skills across a range of subjects. Work in pupils' books shows that this practice is helping them to make progress, especially in writing. Sometimes, pupils make mistakes in their spelling and grammar, in English and in other subjects, which detract from the overall quality of their writing. This prevents them from making even better progress.
- Teaching routinely supports pupils in improving their work, for example by redrafting their writing to include better vocabulary or more complex sentences. Teachers provide pupils with feedback in line with the school's assessment policy and make sure that pupils have time to correct their mistakes.
- Teachers provide pupils with homework in line with the school's policy. Pupils say that they know this homework helps them to improve. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire agreed that they receive valuable information from the school about their child's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The strong relationships that they have with their teachers enable pupils to become confident, resilient learners who are not afraid to 'have a go' and who take pride in their achievements. This makes an important contribution to the progress that they make in their learning.
- Pupils' have excellent attitudes to learning and reward their teachers with high levels of attentiveness and concentration. They chat quietly in lessons about the work that they are doing and sometimes even when they have left the classroom! Older pupils enjoy the visits that they make to local secondary schools. Those who spoke to inspectors understand the links between hard work and their future success. One pupil explained that if they 'stick at it in primary school', their hard work will help them to achieve their ambitions, for example to go to university or to design computer games.
- Leaders and governors have successfully created an extremely open culture, which prioritises pupils' safety and welfare. Staff speak with confidence about the ways in which the school's systems help them to be aware of the many factors affecting pupils' readiness to learn.
- Leaders and governors have established a range of important measures to ease the transition for pupils when they transfer at the end of key stage 1 from local infant schools. A series of visit days helps pupils to get to know their teachers and enables

teachers to check pupils' learning needs. This has a positive impact on the way that pupils settle to learning in their new school and on the progress that they make in Year 3.

- Pupils develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally through a wide range of activities that leaders provide. They learn about other faiths and religions through visits to places of worship. They develop a strong understanding of diversity in families and communities through a range of literature and are confident that pupils with disabilities are well supported by the school.
- Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to take part in charitable work and to understand how different charitable organisations conduct their work in their community. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility, for example as play leaders in the playground and as members of the school council. They are extremely proud of their school and enjoy the chance to represent it in sports competitions and in choir activities, such as 'Young Voices' at the Manchester Arena.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders have successfully maintained the excellent standards of behaviour that inspectors saw in the previous inspection. Teachers' high expectations and consistent use of the school's behaviour policy ensure that pupils behave extremely well in lessons.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably around school and in class. They are extremely polite and well mannered to visitors and to their teachers. Teachers who spoke to inspectors said that they are proud of pupils' behaviour and of the positive comments they receive from the public about pupils' conduct when out on school trips and visits.
- Pupils have faith in their teachers and know exactly who to go to if they need help. Those who spoke to inspectors said that bullying is rare, but that when it does happen, they know that their teachers will deal with it quickly.
- Pupils rarely miss a day at school. Valid reasons led to some pupils having unusually low levels of attendance in 2017/18. These issues have now been resolved and information from the school's systems shows that attendance is once again at least as strong as that of other schools nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In recent years published information about the school's outcomes suggests that, in the past, pupils have made less progress than they should between the start of Year 3 and the end of Year 6. Leaders have established good systems for making sure that their own assessments are as accurate as possible when pupils enter the school at Year 3. Information from these assessments, together with a range of evidence, including work in pupils' books, shows that over time pupils currently in the school now make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Published information shows that pupils' attainment in the key stage 2 national tests has improved over time. In the 2018 national tests at the end of key stage 2, the

proportion of pupils at Seaton St Paul's reaching at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was above the national average and slightly above at the higher standard.

- Overall, pupils in Year 6 in 2018 achieved scores in the national reading tests that were broadly similar to those of other pupils nationally. This represents a steady improvement over the last three years.
- Pupils currently in the school read widely and often and with confidence and enjoyment. The good teaching they receive is helping them to develop their comprehension skills so that they understand the meaning of the texts they read. Leaders and teachers noticed that in 2018, fewer boys than girls reached the expected standard in the key stage 2 tests. They have made changes to the curriculum to ensure that reading engages boys' interests better. As a result, pupils across year groups, including boys, are making good progress.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching at least the expected standard in the key stage 2 national tests in mathematics, although just below the national average, has increased slightly over the last three years. This was reflected in the slightly improved scores that Year 6 pupils achieved in 2018.
- As a result of consistently good teaching, most pupils currently in the school are making strong progress in mathematics. Pupils have opportunities to solve problems and to explain their reasoning. They learn to apply their skills in different ways and occasionally in subjects such as science. Sometimes, younger pupils of lower ability do not have enough opportunities to practise and demonstrate their reasoning skills. When this happens, they make less progress.
- Teachers' assessments show that pupils in Year 6 in 2018 performed slightly better in writing than other pupils nationally, at both the expected standard and at greater depth. Teaching routinely promotes the development of pupils' vocabulary and this is reflected in work in the books of current pupils. Leaders, including subject leaders, ensure that pupils across year groups have opportunities to develop their writing skills across a range of subjects. This contributes positively to the progress that pupils make. However, mistakes in spelling and grammar sometimes detract from the overall quality of writing in current pupils' books and prevent them from making even better progress.
- Published information shows that differences in attainment in the key stage 2 national tests between disadvantaged pupils at Seaton St Paul's and other pupils nationally are diminishing over time. Work in the books of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school shows that they are making similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics to that of their classmates with similar starting points.
- The curriculum provides relevant and interesting opportunities for pupils to develop skills and knowledge across a range of subjects, including science, history, geography, art and French. As well as developing their reading, writing and sometimes their mathematical skills in wider curriculum subjects, pupils also on occasions read texts related to these subjects during English lessons. This helps them to apply their skills in a range of contexts.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 112277 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 10042477 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 262 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ian Grainger |
| Headteacher | Amanda Dickinson |
| Telephone number | 01900 605774 |
| Website | www.seaton-jun.cumbria.sch.uk/ |
| Email address | admin@seaton-jun.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 27–28 January 2015 |

Information about this school

- This junior school is of similar size to an average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is much lower than the national average.
- Fewer pupils than the national average have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Fewer pupils than the national average are receiving support for special educational needs.
- Most pupils transfer from Seaton Academy at age seven.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, school staff and governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and with the school's external adviser.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work during lessons and work produced over time in a range of their books. They also listened to a selection of pupils reading.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement, minutes of meetings of the governing body, assessment information, attendance records, safeguarding records and documentation supporting the improvement of teaching.
- Inspectors took account of 124 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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